

Newsletter

29th November 2020

Sunday's Reading Ezra 7:1-10

Dan Fennell will be bringing us the message

Some Prayers of the people

- Pray for members of our church family who are not well, undergoing tests or recovering from surgery.
- Please continue to pray for John & Dorothy Kester and Sue Kuchel
- Pray that an opportunity to share the gospel with staff and students at the Naracoorte High school will occur in 2021. Continue to support (prayerfully) Kerry Probert in her role as PCW
- Please pray for Ps. Andrew, Yvonne Hogarth, Judy Kreeck, Cherylie McConnell, Ps. Shaun & his wife Jacqui (from the Lutheran Church) as they present the Christmas message to both primary schools on Mon.7/12 in the morning.
- Please pray for Simone Owen as she finalises the Christmas presentation to the Sunrise School.
- Pray for Ps. Andrew, the church elders & church council as they vision the direction of ministry for 2021 & how to appropriate & utilise our current property space.

Notices

AGM will now be on 29th November @2pm.

Nominations for elders to be elected at the AGM are Bob Kester and Joel Munro. Please pray about these nominations.

Friendly Thursday is recommencing this Thursday morning @10.30am.

Provided that COVID-19 Restrictions allow:

December 13th 12-2.30pm following the church service there will be a **Sunday School picnic** at Barnett's.

Please bring chairs, drinks, and a picnic lunch. 94 Wool wash Lane Stewarts Range

Men's Night

Men's night will go ahead at Becroft's, lot 8 Jim Kelly Road @ 5pm. BYO meat, drink, and chair.

Speaker Dan Fennell

Christmas Hampers

The Combined Churches Christmas Hamper Committee is again busy preparing to provide food hampers to needy folk in our community so they can enjoy a Christmas meal.

We need donations of non-perishable food e.g. canned fruit or vegetables, Christmas puddings or tins of ham.

We have been providing hampers for nearly 30 years and last year we provided over 50 hampers.

You will find a box for donations in the foyer to Blackwell Hall. We depend on your help so we can help others. Thanks Jill D.

Mid-Week Bible Reading

Mathew 6:5-14

The Lord's Prayer

⁵ "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁷ "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹ Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,
¹² and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

English Standard Version (ESV)

This, the Lord's Prayer was given by Jesus to his disciples as a model prayer in answer to their request found in Luke 11:1, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

It's all about attitude. It's all about what is really motivating us to prayer.

Jesus tells his disciples, and he tells us, what is acceptable to God. It's not hypocrisy – appearing to humbly come to God but really being very showy about it so that people can see. It's not about the language used. God is looking for honest simplicity; a direct, truthful, and personal conversation. This is not something anyone is capable of without the Holy Spirit leading and transforming our hearts.

To have a real conversation we need to know who we are talking to, that is God our Heavenly Father; and to acknowledge his holiness – “Hallowed be your name”

And we align ourselves with God’s overarching creative and saving purpose – we pray that his will is done on earth, just as it is done in heaven. And we pray for all the requirements of our life because God is the source of all that we have. When we pray this, we acknowledge that all we can ever do is receive.

This far, the petitions of the Lord’s prayer, although profound, are relatively straight forward. The next two are sometimes misinterpreted:

When we pray “forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors”, this is not stating a contractual obligation. God is not obligated by anything we do. Rather, we request forgiveness because we know God is a God of mercy, and out of a transformed heart we reflect God’s mercy, and we forgive. Conversely, if we can’t forgive, we haven’t really turned to God to receive his forgiveness. We haven’t repented – our own attitude separates us from God.

The phrase “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” can be difficult. Firstly, we should understand what it doesn’t mean. James 1:13-15 reads:

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

So, it cannot mean that God is tempting us to do evil. God is not the source of temptation. Temptation starts with us.

So, what does it mean? Partly the problem is one of translation. The Greek word translated “temptation” is πειραζόμενος (peirazomenos) and this has a broad spectrum of meaning running from “entice” through to “test” or “challenge”. Hence the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) translates this verse: “And do not bring us to the time of trial but rescue us from the evil one.”

The word that the ESV translates as “evil” can also mean the “evil one” as the NRSV has it. This is more likely. Two chapters back in Matthew 4:1, Matthew uses the word for “temptation” for the first time and it relates specifically to the Devil tempting, or testing, Jesus in the desert. The Devil tested Jesus and Jesus overcame.

In confrontation with the Devil, we cannot hope to stand on our own against the most malevolent evil being in the whole universe. We can do this only in the strength of Jesus. So, we pray save us from the time of trial and rescue us from the evil one, knowing that Jesus has overcome the temptations of the Devil and defeated all evil and sin in his death on the cross and his rising to new life. We put our trust in him.

Andrew Everson